

**RESOLUTION
OF
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF IOWA LEGAL AID**

**In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement
in Iowa**

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including Iowa Legal Aid, have long recognized that the overarching values of private attorney involvement to LSC-funded programs are increased access, increased human and capital resources, and increased pro bono commitment; and

Whereas, at its April 2007 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation adopted Resolution 2007-003 supporting and encouraging private attorney involvement and urging governing boards of LSC-funded programs to collaborate with other organizations to effectively engage lawyers in pro bono representation and other services that benefit low-income persons; and

Whereas, the LSC Board of Directors resolution builds upon the following national LSC initiatives:

- The October 2005 LSC report, Documenting the Justice Gap in America: The Current Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Americans, which found that 50 percent of the potential clients requesting assistance from an LSC grantee were turned away for lack of resources on the part of the program;
- The LSC Strategic Directions 2006-2010, which calls upon LSC to increase public awareness of and support for legal services to low-income persons in order to respond appropriately to more of their legal needs;
- The LSC Performance Criteria, which consider, in evaluating a program's legal representation and other activities intended to benefit the low-income population in its service area, whether that program effectively integrates private attorneys into its work in order to supplement the amount and effectiveness of its representation and other services;
- The Provision for the Delivery of Legal Services Committee of the LSC Board of Directors 2006 meetings, which highlighted the potential, opportunities and challenges of private attorney involvement and determined ways in which this critical resource can be used more effectively by LSC-funded programs as a means to help close the justice gap;
- The unanimous adoption in January 2007 by LSC Board of Directors of a strategic work plan entitled Action Plan for Private Attorney Involvement: Help Close the Justice Gap, Unleash the Power of Pro Bono, which highlights the benefits of engaging private attorneys to help represent clients of LSC-funded programs and describes ways in which the LSC Board and staff will work to expand private attorney involvement.

- The American Bar Association's Model Rule 6.1 and similar state bar rules note the professional responsibility of every lawyer to provide pro bono legal assistance to persons of limited means;

Whereas, in Iowa there has been a significant commitment to pro bono activities since 1983, including:

- The establishment of the Iowa Legal Aid Volunteer Lawyers Project in 1983, the Polk County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project in 1984, and the Pro Bono Program of HELP Legal Assistance and the Scott County Bar Association in 1980, which programs provide referrals of cases to volunteer attorneys, continuing legal education seminars for attorneys, support resources including the Iowa Legal Aid *Volunteer Lawyers Project Practice Manual*, probono.net, and other support services for volunteer attorneys;
- The establishment of the Iowa State Bar Association Public Service Project (formerly Iowa State Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project) in 1988, which assists with pro bono recruitment, program development and public service efforts;
- In each of the past three years, volunteer attorneys in Iowa have donated in excess of \$1.8 million of time in assisting low-income Iowans, closing in excess of 1,380 each year;
- The Iowa Supreme Court has adopted rules for limited scope representation which will facilitate additional lawyers becoming involved in pro bono activities;
- The Iowa Supreme Court has adopted *pro se* forms to facilitate the handling of legal matters where there are insufficient legal aid staff or volunteer attorneys to provide full representation;
- Iowa Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 32:6.1 sets forth that every lawyer has a professional responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay and should aspire to render at least 50 hours of pro bono publico legal services per year.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Directors of Iowa Legal Aid, in an effort to help close the justice gap in Iowa, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with Iowa Legal Aid and will endeavor to:


- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in Iowa to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within Iowa by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in Iowa to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in pro bono representation and other services that benefit low-income

persons;

- The collaboration will include organizations and entities such as the Polk County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, Pro Bono Program of HELP Legal Assistance and the Scott County Bar Association, the Iowa State Bar Association Public Service Project, the Iowa State Bar Association, local county bar associations, speciality bar groups, the University of Iowa College of Law and Drake University Law School, the Youth Law Center, law firms and corporate law departments, and state and federal courts; and
- Develop strategies that encourage pro bono, including creative recruitment methods and delivery models, attorney practice and continuing legal education rules, and training, mentoring, support, and recognition of volunteers with special emphasis on newly adopted rules regarding unbundled legal services/limited scope representation and *pro se* forms and procedures.

Be it Further Resolved that the Board of Directors of Iowa Legal Aid will promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by continuing to publicize and recognize private attorney involvement in the work of Iowa Legal Aid and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of Iowa Legal Aid on October 6, 2017.



Board Chair